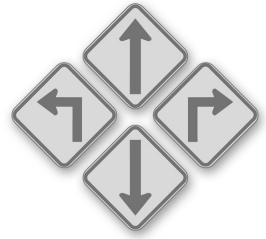
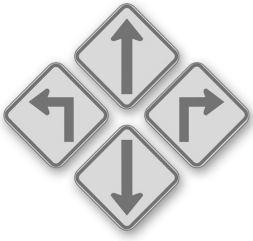


Recommendations for Developing Transportation Initiatives



Although mental health consumers nationwide face many barriers to obtaining transportation, some communities and States have developed initiatives to help overcome these barriers. Federal policy has great potential to improve transportation and, as a result, community integration, for many mental health consumers. The following recommendations by the author and contributors are made for Federal initiatives and for State and local efforts that rely on Federal funds:

- 1 . States inspired by the *Olmstead* decision or the New Freedom Initiative should make transportation a central part of any plan to help people with disabilities live in the community.
- 2 . Information gathered about the accessibility barriers faced by mental health consumers should be shared with transit providers so that they can better understand consumer needs and ensure appropriate transportation access.
- 3 . Projects receiving Section 5310 funding should include people with mental disabilities when they provide services to older adults and people with disabilities.
- 4 . An assessment tool appropriate for mental disabilities should be developed to aid in determining mental health consumer eligibility for paratransit.
- 5 . The half-fare statute or regulations should incorporate a more inclusive definition of disability so that all people with disabilities who also experience hardship qualify.



- 6 . The half-fare statute or regulations should extend reduced fares to rush hour and commuter vehicles, recognizing that many people with disabilities want to work but cannot, due to transportation costs.
- 7 . Materials should be developed for training travel trainers who want to help mental health consumers use public transit independently.
- 8 . State Medicaid agencies should receive technical assistance on implementing Medicaid transit passes, and should be encouraged to provide them whenever feasible.
- 9 . States should receive technical assistance on using Community Mental Health Services Block Grant funds to provide transportation through innovative programs such as consumer-run, volunteer-augmented, and voucher programs.
- 10 . States should follow the Federal lead in coordinating transportation resources to eliminate waste.
- 11 . Mental health consumers, family members, and advocates should receive technical assistance on becoming involved in transportation planning within Metropolitan Planning Organizations and other planning bodies.